

**Position Title:** Soil Conservationist/Natural Resource Specialist

**Locations:** Dodge City, Ulysess, Scott City and Leoti, KS

**Application Deadline:** Open until filled

The Kansas Association of Conservation Districts is seeking talented and experienced individuals to apply their skills to advance sustainable agricultural practices and environmental outcomes in a multi-county area. The incumbent will serve as a conservation leader in the area to foster and expand collaborative partnerships with agricultural retailers, crop consultants, state and federal conservation agencies, and other organizations that help advance a voluntary, incentive-based approach to private lands conservation. The incumbent will provide conservation planning and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers and make them aware of financial assistance programs available to assist them with implementing conservation practices. Positions are currently available in Dodge City, Ulysess, Scott City and Leoti. Successful candidates will be employed by the local conservation district in each location and will work closely with NRCS and other district offices in the project area.

### ***Primary Responsibilities:***

#### **Information and Education:**

- Work closely with public and private partners to help them understand natural resource concerns as identified by NRCS, and conservation programs and practices designed to address those resource concerns.
- Provide training opportunities to conservation partners and other agriculture organizations on state and federal conservation programs to improve awareness, farmer access to assistance, and on-the-ground coordination with CDs and agricultural organizations.
- Provide training and information to CDs and NRCS field offices on modern production agriculture systems, including precision ag, nutrient and pest management, irrigation management and other agronomic services that improve productivity while minimizing natural resource concerns.
- Build conservation expertise and capacity of the CD and partners in the area to drive adoption of on-farm stewardship practices.
- With partners, develop and implement workshops and field days designed to educate farmers, farm-related and farmer-led organizations on best practices and other innovative conservation systems that benefit natural resource quality and farm productivity.

#### **Technical Assistance:**

- Serve as a leader in the multi-county area to advance partnerships through state and federal conservation programs.
- Use the nine-step conservation planning process to develop conservation plans to assist farmers and ranchers to implement conservation practices that reduce natural resource concerns and improve conservation stewardship on their farms and ranches.
- Provide on-site technical assistance to private landowners for the implementation of conservation practices that address natural resource concerns on their land.
- Work closely at building and maintaining a good working relationship with CD and NRCS staff, agricultural retailers and crop consultants, and other resource management professionals, both public and private, in support of a holistic approach to the management of natural resources.
- Assist clients with applying for financial assistance through USDA Farm Bill Programs and other state/local conservation implementation and incentive programs. Assist with application processing, contract development, application ranking and document preparation for program.

- Assist contract holders with technical guidance regarding implementation of their contracts.
- Assist Field Office Staff with monitoring progress of contract implementation, reviews, processing contract modifications and payments, and general correspondence.
- Learn program rules and regulations concerning administration of applications and contracting procedures for each Farm Bill program under NRCS.
- Use agency-specific software related to mapping, planning & implementation.
- Maintain accurate, well-organized records of customer interaction and decisions.

### **Minimum Qualifications:**

- Bachelor's degree in agronomy, environmental science, soil science, horticulture, viticulture, or a closely related field is preferred. A minimum of 5 years specialized work experience in a natural resource management field may be substituted for education.
- An awareness of and working knowledge in:
  - Principles and practices of sustainable agriculture.
  - Soil management practices including conservation tillage, cover cropping, conservation crop rotation, and amendment applications.
  - Have an understanding of irrigated farming operations and irrigation water management practices.
  - Erosional processes and best management practices for water quality protection.
  - Strong communication skills, including both written and public speaking and presentation skills.
  - Strong computer skills, including ability to navigate the internet, use Outlook, create Word, Excel, and PowerPoint documents.
  - Excellent organizational skills, including the ability to set priorities, manage time, work under pressure and manage multiple projects effectively.
  - Desire to embrace the mission of the conservation district in close collaboration with agricultural retailers and crop consultants to promote responsible natural resource management through voluntary community stewardship and technical assistance.
  - Must be willing to travel over a multi county area to work with ag retailers and producers. Occasional use of personal vehicle may be necessary. Occasional overnight travel will be required.
  - Must be willing to maintain a flexible work schedule, with occasional work on weekday nights and weekends being required.
- Must always possess a valid driver's license during employment.
- Must successfully complete a federal background investigation.
- Obtain level 2 e-Authentication.

### **Salary, Benefits, Work Hours, Location:**

- This is a full-time (40 hours per week), salaried position which includes some benefits (paid federal holidays, medical stipend, paid leave). Pay rate will be approximately \$50,000 - \$60,000/year; based on experience. Flexibility in scheduling is possible, with a typical work week being Monday through Friday. This is a three-year, grant funded position, with possible funding extension.

#### **To apply:**

- Interested applicants should submit a complete resume, including three professional references and locations interested in via email to [dan.meyerhoff@kacd.net](mailto:dan.meyerhoff@kacd.net). Resumes will be accepted until positions are filled.